The Gospel in Miniature

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THE GOSPEL IN MINIATURE

An Exposition of the Prayer that Jesus Taught Men to Pray

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TO

MY FATHER AND MOTHER,

WHO FIRST TAUGHT ME

HOW TO PRAY

THE PLAN.

I.

Our Relation to Our Father and His Kingdom.

Our Father.

Thy Kingdom Come.

Thy Will be Done.

II.

Our Relation to Ourselves and to Others.

Give Us this Day our Daily Bread.

Forgive Us our Trespasses.

Lead Us not into Temptation.

Deliver Us from the Evil.

The Prayer.

THE GOSPEL IN MINIATURE.

OUR RELATION TO OUR FATHER AND HIS KINGDOM.

THE prayer which Jesus gave when he taught men how to pray, is the most comprehensive and sublime conception ever expressed. The Bible, taken from every and any standpoint, is the greatest book that has ever appeared. Jesus' words are the most wonderful words of the Bible. This prayer that he taught men to pray is the sum of all his teaching. It is the Gospel in Miniature; The Theology of the Skies; The Constitution of the

Kingdom; The Law of the Realm; The Art of Living; The Logic of Life.

What is prayer? If we turn to the Bible for an answer, we find that the Bible is a poor dictionary, as dictionaries go. However we are not after definitions; we are after the things that make for life. Faith and prayer are matters of experience rather than of expression; to be practiced rather than preached. The infinities of faith and the possibilities of prayer are to be learned by the living of them. Faith and prayer are intimately connected. They are blood relations. They are complementary. Note the setting of the pointed parable on prayer in St. Luke, eighteenth chapter, first eight verses: "Men ought always to pray

and not to faint. . . . Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Faith and prayer are the elements of the atmosphere of the kingdom. We breathe or we die; we breathe constantly, naturally, or our spiritual health is impaired, our vision is not clear, we grow faint. Faith is the soul's inhaling; prayer is the soul's exhaling. Thus we commune with God. "What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." We are told to "pray without ceasing."

Evidently then, prayer does not consist in the posture of the body, but

in the attitude of the sincere soul toward God. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Prayer that puts emphasis on form is not prayer. "Hypocrites love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. The Scribes and Pharisees for a pretense make long prayers." Prevailing prayer does not depend on pretense. Our closets should not be experiment stations; if so, we are experimenting alone. Prayer is the most effective when we are alone with God, talking with him about his kingdom, about ourselves; perchance letting him do most of the talking. "Pray to thy Father which is in secret." Only the humble can prevail

in prayer. This is forcibly taught in the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican. At the throne of grace there can be but one that sits exalted; that is God. If we seek to have it otherwise we will be like the Pharisee who stood and prayed with himself. We must not presume that prayer is an overpersuading of God to do the things that he is not inclined to do; rather it is getting one's self into a proper state for receiving what it is God's highest pleasure to give. The effect and effectiveness of prayer, other requisites being met, are in proportion to importunity, fervency, agony. "Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him?"——"They

saw his face as it had been the face of an angel."——"And, as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering."——"In an agony he prayed more eàrnestly." If we have the kingdom of God within us as God intended that we should have, the soul will naturally go out to the God who gave it. This is prayer. The prayer which is commonly called the Lord's Prayer, is in fact our prayer, if we are his. Jesus had just prefaced this prayer with such remarks as these: "When ye pray, be not hypocrites; use not vain repetitions as the heathen, for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking." I wonder if we have not even in the use of this prayer,

that Jesus taught us, fallen into the use of vain repetitions. Do the sublime heights and infinite depths of the Father's kingdom and will appeal to us with their eternity of meaning, or are we saying just words, words and nothing more? If all professing Christians, all who take that sacred name, could and would pray this prayer day by day, the kingdoms of this world would shortly become the kingdom of our Lord, and most hearts would soon be saying, "My Lord and my God."

What great things this prayer starts out with: "Father," "Kingdom," "Will." It is the most marvelous prayer that was ever composed. It is wonderfully comprehensive. It begins with the most touching and

tender recognition of God: *Our Father.* That means nothing to him who knows him not. It means everything to his child. "Our Father"—My Father.

God is the Creator, the Preserver, the Controller of all things, but He is not the Father of all men in the sense in which Jesus used the term in the beginning of this prayer. God is the Father of spirits, but this is in a creative sense. "Let us make man in our image." The Fatherhood of God can be taken only in a spiritual sense. If we eliminate the office of creator, of preserver, of controller, there is no other relation in which we can conceive of God except that of Father, and this in a spiritual sense. God is

not a universal Father. It is a very consoling sentiment to him who willfully rejects God, and every one does this who does not accept him; it is a very consoling sentiment to the sinner in a general sort of way to regard God as a universal Father, and to presume that this his Father is too good to cast him off forever. To regard God as a universal Father is not reasonable; moreover it certainly is not Scriptural. When these two agree, reason and Scripture, the case is strong, may we not say conclusive? The Scriptures nowhere teach that God is a universal Father. The general tone of the Bible indicates that God is Father only of the faithful. The specific declarations of the Bible prove this. "As many as

received Jesus, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."——"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."——"The sons of God, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, shine as lights in the world."——"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God."——"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

"Wherefore come out from among

them, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and my daughters."

"In this the children of God are manifest and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."

Jesus' own words contained in the eighth chapter of John are conclusive enough for any reasonable mind. In speaking to some of the Jews who were sinners, yet not a special class of sinners, but only fair representatives of them who are of the world, Jesus said: "I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. Ye do the deeds of your father. They said to

him: We have one Father, God. Jesus said: If God were your Father, ye would love me. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." This is very clear and conclusive. Love is the seal of sonship. "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven."

In spiritual things we have to some extent the reverse of the physical. In matters physical a child can not choose his parentage. Would to God, betimes, he could. Many a man is the physical parent of a child, who from every standpoint is unfit for this high and

holy relation. O, this awful scourge! But thanks be unto him whose Spirit leads such an one to turn elsewhere for his spiritual inbreathing; who is so inspired by noble spirits that touch him, that breathe themselves into him, that pour out their lives for him, that his own aspirations reach out for higher and holier things. O, the grandeur and sublimity of such living! Truly, God-made man is but little lower than the angels. In matters spiritual, fatherhood is of free choice. Notice the transformation in the life of Elisha. At the time of his call he said to Elijah: "Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee;" the affectionate remark of a loving son in

regard to parents who were doubtless such as parents ought to be. At the time of Elijah's translation, when a chariot of fire triumphed over the white horse and his rider, after years of fellowship and communion between these hearts that beat as one, this same Elisha cried aloud from the depths of his soul, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof." The great Apostle Paul, time and again, calls Timothy "My son," for he had begotten him spiritually.

Notice the difference between the Christian religion and other religions, so called. The Christian religion is in fact the only religion. It is the only system that gathers together the hopes and fears, the longings and

aspirations of humanity's heart and lays them at the feet of the Eternal; that collects again the reigns of reason and puts them in the hand of Omnipotence. A man is born a Buddhist, a Mohammedan, a Mormon, but to call God Father, "ye must be born again" spiritually. Therefore only those who are born of the Spirit of God can truly say *Our Father.*

When we call God, Our Father, as his children we recognize and realize a nearness and intimacy of fellowship and relationship. Peradventure lest this feeling should in the least in anywise cause us for the moment seemingly to forget that he is high over all, that all reverence is due his high and exalted station, his majestic and holy name,

lest we forget I say, we are taught to pray, *Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.*

Thy Kingdom come has been at least the formal prayer of the Church since the days of Jesus Christ's earthly ministry. Had it been the sincere desire of all who have named that name that is sweeter far than the melody of music, then long ere this the kingdoms of this world would have become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ.

In order to pray most effectively we must, in so far as it is a possibility, understand the nature of the thing prayed for. The best to understand the nature of the Kingdom of God we had best take the testimony of the record he has left us. In this record

we find some startling statements, startling in their simplicity. The Church has never fully comprehended or at least apprehended the nature of the kingdom of God.

Up the river Tiber, far up the Nile, far up the Euphrates, far up the stream of time, there are broken columns and marble heaps, the wreck and ruin of ancient cities that were the seat of empires and kingdoms long since passed away. They stood for a time, they were destroyed, they were broken in pieces and consumed, their armies fought and fell to rise no more, their glories have forever faded, they were of this world. "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be

destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms; it shall stand forever." These are the marvelously prophetic words of the devoted Daniel at the very time, presumably, when he was a Hebrew captive at Babylon.

Standing alone on the pinnacle of the centuries, surrounded by the wreck of kingdoms, gazing upon the ruins of empires that were hoary with age, Jesus Christ began his mission and ministry with this marvelous message and pungent proclamation: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." This is either one of the most presumptuous or princely, one of the most senseless or sublime declarations

in all history. Which? Jesus Christ further declared, "My kingdom is not of this world." This is true in more senses than one; and because of this very fact "not of this world," unlike them "it shall stand forever." The kingdoms of this world are of the head and hand; of self, for self and by self. God's kingdom is primarily of the heart, subjecting and guiding the actions and activities of head and hand. The kingdoms of earth deal with externals. "The kingdom of God is within you." Conquest and commercialism have been the dominant ideas among the nations and powers of earth. Natural things, territory, wealth, people, power, position, and pomp—things that perish—have

been the concern of the kingdoms of this world. The kingdom of God, while having to do with all things of material production or mind conception, deals primarily with the soul-life. The soul lives forever. Therefore "this Kingdom shall never be destroyed."

Jesus in proclaiming and preaching his kingdom never opposed the political conditions that surrounded him, never suggested changes in the social conditions and customs that environed him. His work was intensive, he was sowing the seed, he dealt with the heart-life. Though our work may be extensive as regards the kingdom, yet we must never sacrifice depth for breadth, intensity for extension. Re-

generation of the individual must precede reform in society. But if the leaven of the kingdom of God is hidden in the heart of the individual, its changing, transforming force and power will permeate every fold of his nature and work throughout every avenue of his being. And if a few courageous, conquering souls have thus been regenerated in any community, there will be of necessity a reformation in society. The gospel of the kingdom not only teaches to "take the pearls from the puddle, but to clean up the puddle." The kingdom of God deals with every phase and feature of life; it has to do with every possibility of humanity's advancement; it deals with the full man, in his

complex and composite nature, in his varied and multitudinous relations. It is the tie that binds, the center of every and all systems. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me;" ye are members of the Kingdom. Inasmuch—a great word in this connection—inasmuch as you have done the little deeds; inasmuch as you have disinterestedly discommoded yourself to shoulder that public duty, to labor for civic purity, to put honest, competent men in office, to rid the community of lawlessness and lewdness; inasmuch as you have suffered and sacrificed for love's sake for the good of others, individually and collectively, you are doing the work of the kingdom.

What is the kingdom of God? It is an ideal that is attainable in this world. It is that blessed state and relationship in which we recognize and receive God as Father, and man as brother. Our ideas of God's kingdom are usually misty, intangible, up in the air, un-get-at-able. We look at the kingdom of God from the standpoint and viewpoint of the world, making it of secondary importance. Perchance we are not fully in the kingdom. What meager notions we have of *repentance,—conversion—salvation*, stepping-stones up to the entrance into the kingdom. Repentance is one of the great words of the Bible. But this great first principle of the kingdom has been so chiseled and hacked about

since the days of the Great Preacher, that now it does not seem to have much weight in theory or practice. Nevertheless, the word is still in the great Text-book, and that, too, with all the meaning the Great Teacher and his Forerunner first gave it. A few tears and emotions and contortions do not constitute repentance. That is a repentance, doubtless in ignorance, that will in time need to be repented of. True repentance engages the reason as well as the conscience. Repentance is a full acknowledgment by reason and conscience of the kingdom of God as the greatest thing in the world or out of it. Repentance is primarily a revolution, secondarily a reformation. It has as much to do

with the attitude of one's nature as with his subsequent character and conduct. Repentance means change, a complete change of one's thought and attitude in reference to the kingdom. It means what the word conversion originally meant, a turning about; implying an intellectual acceptance of Christ's teachings, a belief in them, necessitating an emptying of self and selfish ends, an absolute humility before God, a yielding of the affections to him and for his kingdom, a submission of the will. This truly is a mighty meaning; but is it not Scriptural? If repentance really means this, then it may be there are many that profess conversion who have not yet half repented. However, we must ac-

cept a full Gospel or none at all. If man does his part, then it is easy for God to do his. If man does his part, God is under the necessity of doing his. If man truly and earnestly repents, then it is comparatively easy to go on unto perfection. However, it is not a question of possibility, but of choice. "Light came into the world, but men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." Man does not face the light full and fair till he has absolutely and completely surrendered himself in repentance, till he has turned about; this done, there is no trouble for the light to shine in; it must, it will.

The kingdoms of earth deal with humanity *en masse* and by divisions.

The kingdom of God deals with the individual and with society in, through, and for the individual. Many of the kingdoms of earth have been founded on force, physical and otherwise. The kingdom of God is conditioned on the consent of the governed. Therefore, when we pray "thy kingdom come," it means that we are to do all in our power, in private and in public, to bring in that heavenly kingdom. The Christian, in the very nature of the case, is under the obligation and necessity of looking at the world and the things of the world from the standpoint of the kingdom of God. There is for him no dividing line between sacred and secular, between worship and work. Our business life here

should be secondary to our Father's business; our professional life here, secondary to our Christian profession. In a word, we should be Christlike, constantly about our "Father's business." O, this wonderful ideal, how different from the real, your life and mine! Is this ideal practicable? Verily, verily. Christ and his kingdom ought to be, should be, and must be our all and in all.

In religious problems there are two basal precepts and principles that are universally recognized as consistent with the constitution and character of man. Man is by nature a religious being, and will worship. He is assimilated to the character of the thing he worships. What vast reaches of prac-

tical and profound philosophy in the incident of the temptation of Jesus when the King of the Nether World testing the Son of man showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them and said: "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." The reply was the stroke of the Master: "Get thee behind me, Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." What time-servers are the sons of men! How man has fallen down from his high estate that he might obtain the "kingdoms of the world and the glory of them!" How unconsciously it may be, he has worshiped at the shrine of him

who has thus tempted him! How he has been ingloriously transformed and changed from his former glory into the likeness of him whom he worships! How he has apparently been praying for the kingdom, but in reality has been seeking the kingdoms! "Ye can not serve God and mammon."—— "This people honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me."

"The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, joy." Notice the order, the three degrees. We can not have superlative joy without being positively righteous; right with God, right with men, right with ourselves. Peace is the second step, in the comparative. We may and can have a peace within that the

the world knows not of; yet, because we are in the world, though not of the world, our peace may be disturbed, our rest broken. There may be still waters and cloudless skies within, but without there are winds and waves, tempests and billows. Righteousness is the forerunner of peace and joy. If one is not right, it is useless to wish for wings to fly away and be at rest. Rest is harmony. There is rest for the soul only when one is in perfect harmony with God's great purpose and plan for himself and for him in his relation to society. Otherwise there is friction. Idleness is not rest. Man was made in the image of God. The stamp exactly fits the die. There is friction in the great, complex, com-

pound engine of society, because each part has sought to put itself in place. The Master-hand has not adjusted the relations. The tumult and turmoil of society are due to the fact that relationships are not just. There can be no peace except such as is brought about by just relationships. Nothing in the eye of God can be settled until it is settled justly, in justice to man and in justice to God. No compromise is the battle-cry that comes from the great Captain of our salvation. There is peace and harmony throughout the physical universe, because the systems and suns and worlds and satellites have ever been coursing their way in the orbits that the Creator first gave them. There will be peace and har-

mony throughout the race universal in just so far as humanity, collectively and individually, is held in its proper relation to the Sun of Righteousness. Men have philosophized about life, its purpose, its meaning; they have striven to investigate the secret springs that might give perpetual youth, unbounded success, and joy untold. But the simple truths spoken by the lowly Nazarene and lived in his life are profounder far than any system of philosophy that man has ever made. Jesus, the Son of man, lived a life in perfect harmony with his Father and our Father; and O, what peace was his! It revealed itself so wonderfully in that marvelous self-possession which characterized his every word and

movement, it sat enthroned upon his matchless brow, it flooded his whole countenance and being so completely, that his majestic presence was a rebuke to sin and unrighteousness, a never-failing inspiration to the weary and heavy laden, to the downcast and disheartened, to every man or woman or little child that turned his face in appeal toward him, the Friend of sinners, the sympathizing Son of God. And the secret of all his wonderful peace and power was that he was "one with God," one primarily in the same sense in which we can be, and which he meant us to be. "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Let us sit at the feet of the great Teacher and learn

lessons of heavenly wisdom about the kingdom of God. Jesus Christ, the Son of man, is our example.

"Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Here are some great definitions and conceptions. Evidently dictionaries and philosophies differ in different realms and kingdoms, the human and the divine. Moses was a meek man; that is startling. But that we should call that human-divine personage who with a scourge of cords drove the lords of the realm from the temple and denounced the Scribes and Pharisees in the most scathing terms, that we should call such an one, meek, seems paradoxical, incongruous. But

such he was. He was the forerunner of those who are to inherit the earth. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." The meek are the children of the King, citizens of the kingdom. Blessed are they who trust in God and bide their time, who are self-possessed because they are possessed of God, who are becoming masters of the world because they have mastered themselves, who are going on from conquering to conquest because they have yielded in unconditional surrender to the great Conqueror. Pharaoh gave way before Moses because he was meek. Pilate was conscience-struck and thunder-struck in the presence of the meek and lowly Jesus. Roman power was palsied

before Paul, because he was meek. The meek in heart are mighty in conscious courage. They are calm in in the midst of conflict; silent, when silence is golden; majestic in simple, soulful eloquence, when speech is a jewel more precious than diamonds. In the midst of this strenuous, struggling life, they look up at the stars and beyond into the face of the Eternal, and are calm. In the midst of murmuring millions, they hear melodious music, because they are in harmony with the music of the spheres, because they are in tune with the deep undertones of God's purpose and plan that throughout the ages run, because they are in touch with Him who in turn was "touched with the feeling of our

infirmities." The self-righteous are going down through great tribulation, but the meek, "these are they which have come out of great tribulation," and as inheritors of the earth they shall reign for ever and ever, because they are "one with him" who bore the sin, the sorrow and the suffering of the world. They have learned of him. This old world is a hard task-master. It lays many burdens that are heavy to bear. Its yoke is not easy. It chafes and irritates. There is no rest. The wings of a dove will not avail. The laws of the kingdom of God are universal and unchangeable. Service and sacrifice are required of every creature of God's creation. Man is not exempt; but the rather, because much

has been given him, much is expected in return. The edict has gone forth, the burden must be borne, the sacrifice must be made, the suffering must be endured, the service must be given; better by far that we sacrifice and suffer and serve in love. Better, far better that we harmonize with the purpose and plan of the Eternal. This means soul-rest for the restless. Better suit our sails to the heavenly trade-winds; better direct our course by the pole-star, the Star of Bethlehem. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." It is the highest law of the kingdom of God in

its broadest conception, that we are saved to sacrifice, to serve for love's sake.

We can not really pray for the coming of the kingdom, and then do those things that will impede its progress. If we are true and righteous altogether, the moment a self-interest seems opposed to the interests of the kingdom, instantly that self-interest is brushed aside. The moment any business of ours seems incompatible with the business of the kingdom, that moment the business is changed, otherwise the name of the firm, for the Senior Partner is jealous of the business in hand, he will have no other interests before it. Furthermore, if need so require, we will with gladness

and joy yield our interest and change our business, because if the kingdom of God has full possession of us, the interest and thought of the kingdom is the supremest thing in our lives, in life or in death. The oncoming of the kingdom is our watchword, its consummation is our inspiration, it is our all and in all.

There is an imperial swing and sway about the triumphing conquest of the kingdom of God that is about no kingdom of earth. This kingdom is breaking in pieces and consuming all these other kingdoms, because

> "Right is right, since God is God,
> And right the day must win."

The stream of time is strewn with the wreckage of kingdoms that have been

dashed to pieces upon the rocks of unholy ambition and lustful selfishness. The peace of past centuries has been maintained by might. It is therefore temporary. The peace of the kingdom of God is based on right. It is therefore eternal. The sword of God's righteous truth is uncompromisingly drawn against every wrong, public or private, and it shall not be sheathed till every foe is conquered and Christ is Lord indeed; till the kingdom of God has broken in pieces and consumed all these other kingdoms, and their glories have forever gone. Hear that prince of kingmakers prophetically speak as he stands lamenting over his vanishing dream of empire: "My armies have

forgotten me while living, even as the Carthaginian army forgot Hannibal. Such is our power. A single battle lost crushes us, and adversity scatters our friends. But the progress of the faith and the government of the Church are a perpetual miracle. Nations pass away, thrones crumble, but the Church remains."

"From sea to sea
Shall his dominion be,
According to the promise written:
And he in scorn and insult smitten
Shall hear the welcome salutations
Of long oppressed and weary nations;
And he shall rule
Star-crowned and beautiful."

Thy will be done. Why did Jesus use the term *kingdom?* Not because of its Old Testament usage. Not be-

cause it was the common form of government in that day. Not because a kingdom was the expectation of the Jews. It was all these. But the kingdom that Jesus proclaimed was greater than the Old Testament conception, it was beyond prophecy. It was different from all kingdoms of earth. It was absolutely disappointing to the Jews. But Jesus said kingdom, because he meant kingdom. That is what it is. It is a real governmental organization. It was not to be a republic—much as we like that term—for it was "not to be left to other people." It is in form a typical kingdom, an absolute monarchy, in which the will of the King is the law of the kingdom.

Jesus proved himself fit to become God's prime minister in the proclamation and propagation of his kingdom on earth only because he willingly abdicated his throne on high, and in the wilderness temptation showed himself willing absolutely to submit to his Father's will. What humiliation! Nay rather, what exaltation! Jesus ever spoke of this submission with pride and delight: "I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me."——"I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father."——"Not as I will, but as thou wilt."

When Jesus was about to ascend on high to resume his place in glory, he declared: "Greater things than these

[which I have done], shall ye [his children] do, because I go unto my Father." "Greater things," because Jesus was to be forever afterwards at the right hand of our Father in heaven to plead for us and the world's salvation. O, the glory of it! "Greater things than these shall ye do," if only your wills are in harmony, with the will of the Father. Such harmony! Its melodious music far transcends the rapturous sweetness of heaven's angelic choir. This is heavenly —ideal. But the real—what discord! Because we are *willful* instead of meek. How far short we have fallen of the grace that was given us; how we have betrayed the trust that he left us! How life is filled with

struggle and strife! A score of times every day our wills are in opposition to the will of Him who is all-wise and all-loving. O, these wills of ours! It is in this respect alone that the finite most nearly approaches the infinite; the human, the Divine. It is the power of will that holds sway over every soul immortal that is crowding into the broad way that leads to eternal death. This same will power is in the van of all those noble impulses that rise eternal in the heart of Him who is "not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." Will, how Godlike and divine when we rise to those heights sublime where we catch a vision of what it means to be one with God, and our wills of their own accord

breathe forth: "Not mine, but thine be done," a refrain as sweet as ever swelled from the angelic heavenly host. Will, how Satanic and sinful, when in the face of eternal truth and unfathomable love, fighting against all the nobler impulses of the soul, smothering the voice of conscience, trampling under foot the prayers and hopes of those beloved, mocking at the entreaties of friends, leaving unsatisfied the hungerings and cravings of the heart, crushing out life's better part, turning away from God, it obstinately flaunts its challenge in the face of the Almighty God: I am master, I 'll have none of thee—none of thee. Then the recording demon in hell inscribes another name in the book

of doom, for he is a transgressor against the law of the kingdom, against the will of the King. His soul is divided against itself. He lives eternally at war with himself and his God. In human nature and throughout humanity's history, we will to do and we do not, we are at war with ourselves. There are fightings within and fears without. Nation rises against nation, class against class, man against man. Conquest and conflict are the order of the day. Tumult and turmoil rule and reign supreme in all the varied forms of society; and there is that continued struggle and strife in heart, in life, all because the individual soul has not prayed, "Thy will be done."

What false notions have they who glory in license and call it liberty, who vaunt their foppery and call it freedom. Unwilling to submit themselves in obedience to Him who is the fairest ideal among ten thousand and the one in character and conduct altogether lovely, they are in bondage to prejudice and pride, enslaved to self and selfish ends. Liberty without law is license and lawlessness. Freedom without restriction is anarchy. Such liberty and freedom are founded on selfishness and are self-destructive.

"Unbridled spirits ever strive in vain,
Perfection's radiant summit to attain;
Who seeks great ends must straightly curb his force,
In narrowest bounds the master's skill must show,
And only law true freedom can bestow."

What meager conceptions we have of the kingdom! Just so our names are on the Church record; just so we escape the smell of smoke in that great day. A foreigner comes to our shores, lives from the bounty of our land, perchance becomes naturalized — this, however, for personal profit—betrays his trust, intrigues against the government, disobeys its laws. Traitor—anarchist, we cry, and such he is. What think you of a man who lives and moves and has his being in health and in happiness, in security and success, and does not show his gratitude to Him who is the giver of every good and perfect gift, who is the lover of every sinning, suffering, sorrowing soul? He who strives to enter the king-

dom and maintain himself therein for self-salvation only, has a very meager conception of the purpose and plan of God's kingdom. A man's horizon all depends on his altitude. What difference there is between sight, human and divine. Man seeks to secularize the sacred; God ever exalts humanity. Read again the passage in the Gospels in regard to paying tribute. That last declaration of Jesus contains the whole philosophy of the Christian system: "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar's, and unto God the things which be God's." Is there any doubt that Jesus, when he questioned, "Whose is this image and superscription," had in mind his Father's words on record in Genesis,

"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness?" Therefore, when Jesus the Son of God, answering those tempting him, said, "Render unto God the things which be God's," he meant that man universally, you and I, are in duty bound to render ourselves unto Him, in whose image we are made, and whose superscription we bear; he meant that we are in duty bound to render ourselves, our wills, our all in willing submission to him whose will is absolute, and absolutely controlled by a love that is infinite, who, in creating us, made us but little lower than the angels; he meant that we are in duty bound lovingly to obey him with all the powers of our being, because he benevolently created us, be-

cause he mercifully preserves us and bountifully provides for our every need, because he desires to re-create his Spirit within us, so that being born again, we may come into that natural and intimate relationship wherein we are the sons and daughters of God, seeking not our own will, but doing with delight the will of our Father.

"My will, not thine be done" changed angels of light into demons of darkness, and the Garden of Eden into a desert waste. Satan has a kingdom. In it the will of the king is the law of the kingdom. "Look out for number one," there is no number two. Satan is selfishness incarnate. The kingdoms of this world and the glory of them have perished and are perishing

because, in their external relations and in their inner life, they are states and types and symbols of this Satanic, selfish kingdom. The kingdom of Satan shall come to naught, because the law of his kingdom is suicidal. A house divided against itself can not stand. Neither can a house that is built on the sand, because every particle of sand is independent, for itself. Selfishness is self-destructive, for society, for the home, for the individual. Class is arrayed against class, the interest of one seems to be the injury of another, because they are selfish, because they emphasize their rights and the other's duty. In a home where love is lacking, where mutual forgiveness and forbearance

are strangers, there peace and happiness are unknown; it is no home, only a house left desolate. The selfish man is unwelcome, he blurs, he blots, he burdens. He is a murderer and a suicide. Human nature is the same in all ages of the world. It may and does exhibit itself in different ways. All sin is born of selfishness. Selfishness is the mainstay of the kingdom of Satan. Therefore it shall fall.

The law of the kingdom of God is of the nature of the King. Jesus, the Christ, came and lived among men, he went about doing good, he had not where to lay his head, he helped, he healed, he was moved with compassion and comforted those

about him, he restored the blind, he raised the dead, he sympathized, he suffered, he sorrowed, he pitied, he pardoned, he forgave, he forgot, he was forgetful of himself, he was unselfishness incarnate, because he loved us so. He came to reveal to us the Father. "God is love." That is all the Scriptures say, that is all that Jesus lived. His whole life says: I and the Father who are one, want your loving obedience. We love you with an infinite love, with a love greater than we can tell or than you can understand. To show this love, to prove the sincerity of our declaration, for you and for all the world forever, I will seal my profession with this the greatest token that man can give of

his love. I will die for you for love's sake.

> "Love divine, all love excelling;
> Joy of heaven to earth come down!"

Love is life-giving. This is the voice that comes across the centuries from Calvary's Cross. Humanity's millions are being regenerated, physically, intellectually, spiritually, because some one has denied himself and taken up a cross; because some one has toiled for others; because some one has suffered for others; because some one has sacrificed for others; because some one has died for others; because some one has striven, has toiled, has suffered, has died willingly, gladly, vicariously, triumphantly! Heroes, heroes—they who dare to do and die for country's

sake, for humanity's sake, for love's sake, these are they which have come out of great tribulation, these are they that shine above the brightness of the stars, these are they that hold the keys of heaven. Beneath the surface, the life of the world is one great heart-ache. Every hardship that is undergone, every sorrow that is endured, every sacrifice that is made, every life that is laid down vicariously, for the sake of others, will yield an hundred-fold harvest in dispelling the gloom, in lessening the suffering, in relieving the heartache of this old world. This is the high tragedy of heroes. This is that that triumphs. Heroic tragedy ends in heavenly triumph. This is the voice that is re-

echoed from every martyr's pyre. Martyrs are humanity's heaven-kissed knights. They are the messengers that shall bring in the millennium. Sainted heroes, sent of God!

> "Thy saints in all this glorious war
> Shall conquer though they die:
> They see the triumph from afar,
> By faith they bring it nigh."

"This kingdom shall consume and break in pieces all these other kingdoms;" because love is constructive, upbuilding, uplifting; because love shall conquer lust, and unselfishness shall triumph over selfishness.

In the kingdom of God, the will of the King is the law of the kingdom. Jesus has proclaimed it to the world. It has not been a score of years since

one of America's great political leaders proclaimed that "The Sermon on the Mount is an iridescent dream." Jesus proved in his life that the law of the kingdom is practical. To-day one of America's greatest statesmen, of acknowledged supremacy in the right understanding of the economical and social questions before the nation, declares that our economical and social problems will never be solved and settled until they are solved and settled according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Truly "Our God is marching on." The will of the King, which is the law of the kingdom, is the sum and source of all law that shall abide. "Thou shalt love God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor

as thyself." How comprehensive! how inclusive! how exclusive! It comprehends the law and the prophets. It is so comprehensive that nothing can be added to it or taken from it. It is the sum and source of the light and life of the kingdom. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Genuine, true love toward God is willing to make any sacrifice to serve one's neighbor and advance the kingdom. Such love lays emphasis on one's duty and another's rights. Such love "seeketh not her own." Such love will wage a holy war upon all forms of unrighteousness, both public and private. Such love "beareth all things, endureth all things." Such love will prove its genuineness in a thousand

ways, even to the laying down of life itself. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." It is a great thing to have the friendship of God. But it is a far greater thing to be God's friend. We prove our friendship by the doing of his command. "This is my commandment, That ye love one another as I have loved you." We can be imitators and exemplars of Jesus, not by straggling far behind, but by coming right after him, by closely following him. And how? "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." What slight and slavish

notions we have of cross-bearing! We deny ourselves the fashions and frivolities of society during Lent; we absent ourselves from questionable places and performances for pretense and policy's sake; we conform to certain forms because we must; we count it a cross to testify to our experience —no wonder; we think we have taken up our cross when, for the sake of keeping the meeting going, we pretend to pray a sentence prayer; in fact, we do go so far as half earnestly, half honestly to endeavor to do everything but the one and only thing needful—we do not "deny ourselves." We have all the while been compromising with self, with sin and with Satan. Read again the passage in the eighth

chapter of Mark, from which the above quotation is taken. Jesus had just been teaching his disciples that he must suffer, and be rejected, and be killed. Peter rebuked him. For what? For being so unselfish, for laying the chief corner-stone of the kingdom of God, for being willing to deny himself, to take up his cross, to die—according to his Father's will—to save others. "He saved others; himself he can not save." How glad I am 't was true. How truly they spake; they knew it not. A self-saver could not be a world-saver; could not then, can not now. The rebuking Peter was in turn rebuked. "Get thee behind me, Satan; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but the

things that be of men." It was the same temptation as in the wilderness; self, or service; willfulness, or obedience to the will of the Father. Jesus had settled it long ago, and that too, to the satisfaction of his Father. Have we? We can not follow this world Savior, until we have taken up our cross. We can not take up our cross, until we have denied ourselves. It is either, deny self, or deny God. Which? "Our Father, thy will be done!" "It is our Father's good pleasure to give us the kingdom." But we can not be half slave and half free. It is our Father's will to overthrow everything Satanic and selfish within us. However, God does not begin the process by first taking off a piece of the fancy

cornice and then a top brick, but he first aims his mighty blows against the chief corner-stone of the kingdom of Satan. Selfishness must yield, self must be denied. "He that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God." I would rather have the lowly Nazarene confess me before the angels of God in that great day, than to-day to have my name acclaimed by every potentate and power of earth. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.'

Thy will be done. Neither Jesus the Christ, nor God the Father ever inspired a heart-longing that they can

not satisfy. Every sincere prayer is surely answered. "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye shall receive them, and ye shall have them." The supremest ambition, and aim, and desire, and delight of the Christian's heart is that his Father's will may be done. But since his Father is infinite, and he is finite, there must of necessity be back of and beyond every petition, either expressed or implied, "If it be thy will." Therefore since he desires above all things else the doing of his Father's will, his every petition and prayer is answered "abundantly above all that he can ask or think."

Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Heaven — I know not

what or where, but it is a place where the will of God is absolutely done. That is what makes heaven. Heaven is not so much a place as a condition. "Thy will, not mine, be done," is turning this old wilderness world back into a heavenly paradise. That we love God supremely and our fellow-men unselfishly is Christlike; it is the magnet-power that draws heaven to earth. There is a reasonableness in the Christian religion that is just beginning to dawn upon the world. "The morning light is breaking." The simple truths, spoken by the lowly Nazarene, and lived in his life, are profounder far than any system of philosophy that man has ever made. Whenever and wherever we do the will of our Father

absolutely, then and there "heaven comes down our souls to greet." "Heaven is not far away when Jesus is near."

"Take my will and make it thine,
It shall be no longer mine;
Take my heart, it is thine own,
It shall be thy royal throne,"

to rule and reign forever there,

"Not as I will; the sound grows sweet
Each time my lips the words repeat;
Not as I will; the darkness feels
More safe than light when this thought steals
Like whispered voice to calm and bless
All unrest and all loneliness.
Not as I will; because the One
Who loved us first and best has gone
Before us on the road, and still
For us must all his love fulfill
Not as we will."

II.

OUR RELATION TO OURSELVES AND TO OTHERS.

The Bible as a whole is one great harmony. Incomplete would be the music that came only from the bass or treble of an instrument. One must complement and supplement the other. So with the testaments of the Bible. Between them there are many points of contrast and comparison. There is much similarity of division between the Ten Commandments of the Old Testament and this prayer of our Lord's teaching in the New. The Ten Commandments are practically the

sum and substance of the spirit of "the law and the prophets." This prayer is the Gospel in Miniature, given to us by our Savior, testifying to the spirit of the Old Testament, "for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." In the table of the Ten Commandments, the first four deal with our duties and relations to God; the last six with our duties and relations to our fellow-men. In the prayer the first petitions deal with our relation to our Father and his kingdom; the last with our relation to ourselves and to others as viewed from the standpoint of the kingdom.

Thus far we have been talking to our Father about the great things: Father —Kingdom — Will. We have been

talking about the constitution of the kingdom and things eternal; now come the by-laws, the secondary things, the things that naturally grow out of and are founded upon these foundation principles. Right here let us introduce the tie that binds, the words that by inference and implication connect the two divisions of the prayer. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." This is the declaration of the Son of God. It must be true. But how? why? Because man's horizon is narrow, so narrow that its center and circumference are one and the self same thing—himself. Strain our eyes as we may, we can but see a span. We can not with

human vision behold the fields of beauty and the visions of glory just beyond. We are bewildered at the sights we do see, because we are looking from the plane of humanity with the eyes of humanity self-centered, self-satisfied. But let the soul mount upward upon wings of faith to the lofty summits of divinity, to the battlements of glory, and from this exalted height view the affairs of humanity with the eyes of Divinity; how plain seem even the farthest limits of human expectation! how great the difference between sight, human and Divine! Humanity has eyes, but it sees not; Divinity sees. So the soul of man after having communed with the Divine and being com-

missioned by the Divine goes among men fulfilling its mission, continually bathed in the sunlight of God's presence, walking upon earth, yet talking with God. Does this theory contemplate the dethronement of those ambitions which commonly inspire the hearts of men? No—not by any means. It simply emphasizes the fact that if the Christian Religion is anything it ought to be everything. It simply means that it is the highest nobility of manhood to profess the name and possess the nature of Him who was one with his Father. The highest and noblest characteristic of humanity is its recognition of Divinity. With one hand in the hand of Omnipotence, we with the other can remove

obstacles and surmount difficulties before insurmountable.

The little streamlet gushing from the western slope of the Rockies, by means of its dashing waters, speaks its desire to the great mountain to pass beyond its summit to the plains of the eastern side. But the great rocky mass gives its answer in the roar of the torrent leaping over the lofty precipice: "Thou shalt not go over." However the little streamlet is borne onward lost in the embrace of the broad river, till finally in quiet it rests upon the bosom of the deep. The sun shines forth, and by a process unseen, unknown, yet most wonderful, draws the little stream in the form of mist, devoid of its dross, skyward. A small cloud is formed

high up in the air, and a passing breeze catching it in its arms, bears it eastward over valley, hill, and this same mountain summit, and lets it fall upon the plains beyond in gentle rain, whose drops in passing through the air sing forth a song of victory, because first they sought the skies. So the soul of man in its struggle alone dashes downward like the little stream, till finally it submissively rests on the bosom of God's mercy, and being transformed by the Sun of Righteousness, leaving all impurity behind, it is carried heavenward, whence it may be transported by the trade-winds of the skies over any summit of wealth, and power, and honor, and fame, that Divinity in its Omniscience may direct.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." But, in his devotion to the larger things of the kingdom, is n't it possible that God may overlook—say, the supplying of our daily bread? We fear so. Therefore in a way that is assuming and presuming we are "about our Father's business." People that have time to attend to other people's business in a way that they should not, usually neglect their own interests. We have taken so much "thought for the morrow," that for to-day we have not had time to "seek the kingdom." We have done the things we should not, and have left undone the things we should have done; therefore we are

undone, we are clothed upon with our unrighteousness instead of His righteousness. "Seek ye first"—first in importance, first in time. Has the Omnipotent God ever failed one who met the conditions?

Give us this day our daily bread. This is something the weakest and poorest of God's children can confidently ask for. The rich and powerful can ask for no more. More is as much a hinderance as a help in the affairs of the kingdom, if we only knew it. To one who loves supremely the King and his kingdom, who lives for them and is willing to die for them, to such an one his temporal needs are of small concern. The child of God, who really understands the purport and im-

port of the purpose and plan of God's kingdom, would rather starve than disobey his Father's will, would rather be naked than not clothed upon with his Father's righteousness. Jesus, the Son of man and the Savior of the world, said: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." Not for wealth, nor power, nor place, nor popularity, for none of these may we pray without this condition: "If it be thy will;" but the petitions of this prayer are unconditioned, for these things are all in accord with the Father's will, fundamental to the kingdom. If we are God's children, we can absolutely pray, *Give us this day our daily bread.* But do we really pray thus? If so,

then we really believe it. But our very lives are a proof of our disbelief. We seem to be more concerned about fire insurance and life insurance here than hereafter, about the bread that perishes than the bread of life. These matters, these lesser matters are all right in their place, but their place is secondary. This prayer is given in that marvelous discourse, The Sermon on the Mount, sometimes called Jesus' Inaugural. Jesus takes much of this discourse in trying to impress the unalterable fact that the heavenly Father will feed and care for his own. "Behold the fowls of the air. . . . Consider the lilies of the field." Not only here, but elsewhere throughout his teach-

ings, he endeavors to present this lesson of simple faith to those of little faith. And yet how much of our time and spirit are literally consumed in anxiety about our "daily bread!" A small part of the human family are seeking to acquire greater riches, but the larger part in Christianized countries as well as in heathen, are striving to "make both ends meet," to "keep their heads above water," to "keep soul and body together," to keep from starving, and yet they are really starving for lack of "that better part." It is the spirit of the times. O for the good new times when men will "trust in the Lord." "Trust in the Lord, and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed."

How we grow feverish and fret about the morrow!

"Lord, for to-morrow and its needs
I do not pray;
But keep me, guide me, love me, Lord,
Just for to-day."

Forgive us our trespasses, as we have forgiven those who trespass against us. The best comment on this petition is found in the Gospel of Matthew, the eighteenth chapter, verses twenty-one to thirty-five inclusive: "Then came Peter, and said to him, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times? Jesus said unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times: but until seventy times seven. There-

fore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king which would make a reckoning with his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not wherewith to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down and worshiped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And the lord of that servant being moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. But that servant went out and found one of his fellow-servants, which owed him an hundred pence; and he laid

hold on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay what thou owest. So his fellow-servant fell down and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee. And he would not: but went out and cast him into prison, till he should pay that which was due. So when his fellow servants saw what was done they were exceeding sorry, and came and told unto the lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt because thou desiredest me: shouldest not thou also have had mercy on thy fellow-servant, even as I had mercy on thee? And his lord was wroth and delivered him to the

tormenters, till he should pay all that was due. *So shall also my heavenly Father do unto you if ye forgive not every one his brother from your hearts.*" Forgiveness is not formality. Seven was considered a sacred number. So Peter thought he was giving good Gospel measure and coming up to his sacred duty when he asked, "Till seven times?" Names and numbers are different in the kingdoms and in the kingdom. In one, surface indications suffice. God looketh on the heart. "By their fruits ye shall know them." The fruits of the Spirit are not so much actions as heart-conditions. Not doing, but being. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, good-

ness, faith, meekness, temperance." If a person has the right relation to God and the proper conception of his kingdom, there will be no effort in forgiveness, there will be no changed condition of the heart, for the heart of God's child can have no haven in which to harbor hate, or grudge, or spitefulness, or dislike, or coldness. Not to forgive would be the unnatural thing. To forgive and forget is divine. To ask forgiveness is hard, but truly to forgive those who have wronged us, this takes grace divine. But this is the condition upon which is based our petition praying for forgiveness from our Father. "As we have forgiven, forgive." Jesus knew full well the difficulty and depth of

meaning involved. The verses immediately following the prayer are an added injunction and pointed explanation. "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive your trespasses." The whole subject of true forgiving is beautifully involved and interwoven in the last verses of Matthew's fifth chapter: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and send-

eth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if you salute your brethren only, what do you more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Thus do the children of God. "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."

Lead us not into temptation, into trial. God enticeth no man to sin, "neither will he suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it." The way of escape. That is the point. Let us fix our minds on the

way, not on the temptation. "I am the way." Wonderful! Blessed promise, sure relief. The temptation of Jesus may not be exegetical of the temptation here implied, but if Jesus is the way, then surely at this juncture it may be profitable to note the way in which he overcame. In all probability that is to be our way of escape. But if Jesus was the Son of God, how then? Truly, he was the Son of God, but in his earthly estate, he was pre-eminently the Son of man. Thus he ever spoke of himself, with scarce an exception, and as a perfect man he was tried, and tempted, and triumphed. What a source of encouragement, of uplift, of inspiration, when we seek to follow and fathom

the life of Jesus, as the life of the Son of man! "I am the way." Jesus was tempted during forty days. These temptations were doubtless varied and manifold. What they were we can only conjecture. We have three citations, different in kind and nature, but involving the same point. The first temptation was complete in its material surroundings. The stones to be turned to bread were there. The second was a vision temptation. Jesus in imagination and fancy was taken to a pinnacle of the temple. A vision-temptation, but none the less real. Imagination is the soul's forerunner. The third temptation was a vision temptation. For of course Jesus was not transported to a mountain summit

whence he could survey all the kingdoms of the world. The acts noted or suggested in at least two of these temptations were not sinful in themselves, but the yielding would have been sin. Jesus was as really and truly tempted as ever man was. It is the testing of a perfect nature. It is the testing of the human; nor did Jesus appeal to his superhuman power for his relief. He had just been owned by God as his Son, and now while he is an hungered, the devil takes this as his keynote: "If thou be the Son of God, command this stone to be made bread." How subtle—the devil's trick! To have yielded would have been natural for us—if we can conceive of the relation, but it would have been

unnatural for this perfect Man. For Jesus to have yielded would have been to disobey and doubt his Father. His hour was not yet come. Jesus employed a natural means of defense. He came off victorious. We by the same method can have the same result. Jesus was in the spirit of prayer, he quotes Scripture. Satan is routed. This appeal was to Jesus' physical nature and necessity. The Son did not doubt nor disobey his Father. The devil makes another approach. "Of course you are the Son of God by declaration, but prove it to your satisfaction by experimentation; this will at once and forever set at rest those questionings of your mind, and you can at once set out upon your

mission with heart, and hope, and courage. This will be a sure sign; test your Father and triumph." And the devil also quotes some Scripture. Jesus does likewise and refutes him. Again it is written: "Thou shalt not test the Lord, thy God." Jesus needed no sign, his Father's word was enough. What simple, childlike, sonlike faith! Satan now fully realizes that he is in a contest with the Divine. With one majestic sweep he now puts forth his most strenuous effort. There at once pass in review before Jesus' mind, the kingdoms of the world in all their power and glory. What an appeal to an ambitious soul! What power, what glory could have been his, could have been theirs, for this was the expecta-

tion, the dream of the Jews! A religious political empire with Jesus at the head might in some sense have been successful; might have made it possible that something of the kingdom of God would have sifted down through the different strata of society, organized and unorganized, into the hearts and lives of men. But God's kingdom was not of this world. It was to begin with foundation principles. The heart of humanity was to be won, the affections of men were to be gained, and it was only a full measure of love poured out in a life of sorrow, of suffering, of loneliness, of longing, of hardships, of heartaches, only such love as this that could woo and win the love

of mankind. Jesus knew what was before him. His human nature shrank from such a life; the devil presented another possible way. It may have appealed to Jesus. But it was not the Father's way and will. That was more to him. The devil now leaveth him awhile; doubtless he returned time and again throughout Jesus' life. But this perfect man knew the Scriptures. Moreover he prayed without ceasing. Jesus may never may have been tempted in ways that we are tempted, but his temptations were just as real. Jesus was the tried and true, tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. The same vital point was involved in the temptation of Jesus, as in the temptation of

any child of God. Simple trust and absolute obedience. Jesus proved his absolute trust in and submission to the Father. He was one with the Father, in the same sense in which he meant us to be one. If the kingdom and will of our Father have absolute sway and supremacy in our lives, we will absolutely trust and obey him. This point gained and held, it will be as impossible for us to yield to temptation as it was for Jesus. "There is no other way but to trust and obey." "I am the way."

Lead us not into temptation. We are prone to believe that the bread question, as involved in the temptation of Jesus, is not here implied. We must not be too sure about that.

Is it not, has it not been one of the first and foremost temptations of the Church and the child of God in all ages of the world to pray to our Father: "Give us this day our daily bread," and then straightway to forget what manner of being our Father is, to distrust his promise and his power, to be anxiously concerned about the morrow, to fret our souls constantly about our merest needs, to trespass against the demands of his kingdom and the supremacy of his will? O Lord, "forgive us our trespasses." If in the course of life we find ourselves in those circumstances and surroundings where we are prone to think more of ourselves than of our Father; more of our property than of his kingdom; more of

reputation-getting than of character-building; more of the consummation of our plans and purposes than of the doing of his will; more of living than of life, merciful God, deliver us. Give us the grace to deliver ourselves. But *lead us not into temptation.* Lead us not into those situations and circumstances, wherein because of business relations or pleasure, because of the influence of riches, of ambition, of popularity, we would be ashamed of Christ and his cross. How many men, Christian men, refuse at the dictate of conscience and reason, openly to take a stand for any great moral reform for fear it will interfere with their business, their profession! What about the business of the kingdom?

What about their Christian profession? Are they God's children? His children pray for the coming of his kingdom, they profess his name and are about his business. Prayer not backed by devotion and action is not prayer. *Lead us not into temptation* of using "vain repetitions," for we know that we shall not be "heard for our much speaking," but for our genuine praying. Disregard of law is the curse of the American Republic. We make laws to break them. We elect and select men supposedly to enforce law and keep order, when really we know they will connive at law-breaking and create disorder. And commonly there is scarcely a protest even from Christians, that in numbers are millions

strong. Disregard of law Divine is the curse of the Christian Church. "We are saved to serve." This is God's greater law for the Christian civilization of the twentieth century. We are not to serve so much by meeting for services within walls that have been built with hands, this is worship; and all the more glorious will it be if we have done with our might what our hands find to do, in regenerating and renovating society, in attacking wickedness in high places and low, in standing uncompromisingly for the majesty and the masterful enforcement of enacted law, human and Divine. But it might disturb the peace, many will say. God grant that it may! O this ease in Zion! "You had

better stick to moral suasion and not tamper with the law" smells like sulphur fumes, the very breath of Satan himself. Who first, pray tell, has tampered with the law? The liquor traffic is at present the devil's right arm of power. It steals, it lies, it destroys homes, it murders, it sits in places of prominence and power, it mocks you, it prostitutes purity, it is in partnership with the government, it takes away reason, conscience, it stands in the church door and says: "Thou man of God, the king (alcohol) hath said, Come down!" And down we have come. O, the shame of it! This business regards neither law, life, liberty, nor the pursuit of happiness. When stringent laws have been en-

acted against it, in piteous tones it has cried: Give us a law that is reasonable, some restrictive legislation that we can keep inviolate. And upon the giving of the same, it has been more shameful in its violation than before. This traffic knows no law, except the law of its father's kingdom: selfishness, the corner-stone and the capstone of the kingdom of Satan. All for self; and in truth it seems in these times that it is taking our all, millions upon millions of money, thousands upon thousands of men, women and children, body, mind and soul. "See the mighty host advancing, Satan leading on." Well, now, some one will say, it is all very well to grow eloquent over the evil of intemperance and deal

in glittering generalities that will raise the moral tone; but here in our community, right here at home, among neighbors and friends, we had better be a little cautious. Ours is a good community, generally law-abiding. Of course, some will drink anyhow, and what little traffic there is among us is carried on no doubt in a legitimate sort of way, and that too by some of our leading citizens; and these men in the event of an open fight would no doubt have public opinion on their side. You had best not disturb the peace and the business interests of the community. Of course, we appreciate your zeal, but then—your judgment. "But then—*the* judgment." Public opinion is the mightiest monarch that sits on a

throne. Public opinion, when it is the untrammeled, spontaneous expression of the real sentiment of an enlightened people, then public opinion is right. But such public opinion is often belied by the devil's aristocracy of the self-styled, so-called "leading" citizens. Let a man of true purpose seek to reform in almost any community an existing evil which is fathered and fostered by this pseudo public opinion, and he is derided, laughed at, boycotted, or at least passed by on the other side by these leading citizens. Leading citizens, men who have sold their birth-right; leading citizens, men who wink at lawlessness and injustice; leading citizens, men who because of direct assistance or non-intervention,

encourage the evils that stalk our streets; leading citizens, men who will advocate a policy that will send a human being reeling down the street—heaven only knows whither; leading citizens, great God, men who are leading our boys to drunkards' graves!

> "God of our fathers, be with us yet,
> Lest we forget, lest we forget."

It is quite true that we will disturb the ordinary business relations of life to some extent, when we disturb the liquor business. But it began the disturbance. It is our business as children of God, to be co-laborers with God in bringing in his kingdom, in uplifting humanity, in regenerating society. And diametrically opposed to this our God-given business is this dev-

ilish business of the liquor traffic. Children of the Heavenly King, where are we? The secret and center of this traffic is selfishness. And if we have not enough interest in the business of the kingdom, if we have not enough "inasmuch" love for our fellow-men to cause us to sacrifice somewhat of ease, of popularity, of self, to serve them, then the secret and center of our lives is selfishness. I am not now pleading that you vote as I vote, that you think as I think, not at all, but I am pleading for your sakes, for the sake of humanity, for the sake of the kingdom of our Father, who loved us so, that unhesitatingly, uncompromisingly you follow unfalteringly the light of conscience and of reason. The Lord God

himself giveth this light. Lord God, our Father, *lead us not into temptation.* May "we be not conformed to this world; but transformed by the renewing of our minds, that we may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

Deliver us from the evil. The previous petition referred to allurements from without, this last to enticements from within. The previous petition referred to things that for the most part are not sinful in themselves, but may become sin because of our attitude thereto. This last petition refers possibly to sin as such and to the incarnation of sin, the devil. From him and the very atmosphere of his kingdom, our God is able to deliver us.

One evening in one of our large cities, a gentleman, wishing to test the courage of his little boy, told him to go on an errand up the street. The little fellow had never been out alone before after dark; but somehow at this time he felt a strange confidence possessing him. So putting on and buttoning up his overcoat, for it was winter, he started out. Presently the father follows at a short distance behind, to see that no harm came to the one he loved so dearly. In due time the little fellow returned, none the wiser in regard to his protector. So when our Father tells us to go here or yonder, even though it be through the valley of the shadows, we need fear no evil because we know that he is not far off, even by

our side. And as we journey through the world we can clasp a hand that the world can not hold, we can see a face of tenderness that the world can not see, we can hear a voice of gentleness that the world can not hear, and finally, after walking with our dear Savior here below, after being transformed from character unto character, we shall walk and talk with him above, where we shall be like him, and shall see him as he is.

> "And when I see him face to face,
> My song shall be: I'm saved by grace."

Deliver us from the evil. May our senses, like an æolian harp, be swept by heavenly breezes, the very breath of the living God! May lust be swallowed up of love, and our souls be

passionate for the doing of our Father's will and the ushering in of his kingdom!

Our Father which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done in earth,
As it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil.

2